



# English Toolkit: Indicator 1.1.1

Student Handout: English: Indicator 1.1.1

## Goal 1.0 Reading, Reviewing and Responding to Texts

Expectation 1.1 The student will use effective strategies before, during, and after reading, viewing, and listening to self-selected and assigned materials.

Indicator 1.1.1 The student will use pre-reading strategies appropriate to both the text and purpose for reading by surveying the text, accessing prior knowledge, formulating questions, setting purpose(s), and making predictions.

Assessment Limits:

Recognizing the implications of text features

Linking appropriate experiences and prior knowledge about the topic, author, or type of material to the text

Identifying an appropriate purpose for reading the text

Identifying questions a reader would expect to be answered by reading the text

Identifying topics of discussion that may enhance a reader's understanding of a text

## Public Release - Selected Response Item - Released in 2009

English Indicator 1.1.1

Read the essay "[Water](#)." Then answer the following item.

Which of these topics would be best to discuss to help a reader prepare to understand the essay?

- A. the illnesses caused by impure water
- B. the origin of the Peace Corps program
- C. traditional ceremonies in West African villages
- D. challenging living conditions in some places

Correct Answer

- D. challenging living conditions in some places

## Item

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## Handouts

Rachel Schneller was a Peace Corps volunteer in Mali, West Africa, from 1996 to 1998. In her essay "Water," Schneller describes her experiences while working in a West African village.

### Water by Rachel Schneller

When a woman carries water on her head, you see her neck bend outward behind her like a crossbow. Ten liters of water weighs twenty-two pounds, a fifth of a woman's body weight, and I've seen women carry at least twenty liters in aluminum pots large enough to hold a television set.

To get the water from the cement floor surrounding the outdoor hand pump to the top of your head, you need help from the other women. You and another woman grab the pot's edges and lift it straight up between you. When you get it to the head height, you duck underneath the pot and place it on the wad of rolled-up cloth you always wear there when fetching water. This is the cushion between your skull and the metal pot full of water. Then your friend lets go. You spend a few seconds finding your balance. Then with one hand steadying the load, turn around and start your way home. It might be a twenty-minute walk through mud huts and donkey manure. All of this is done without words.

It is an action repeated so many times during the day that even though I have never carried water on my head, I know exactly how it is done.

Do not worry that no one will be at the pump to help you. The pump is the only source of clean drinking water for the village of three thousand people. Your family, your husband and children rely on the water on your head; maybe ten people will drink the water you carry. Pump water, everyone knows, is clean. Drinking well water will make you sick. Every month, people here die from diarrhea and dehydration. The pump is also where you hear gossip from the women who live on the other side of the village. Your trip to the pump may be your only excuse for going outside of your family's Muslim home alone.

When a woman finds her balance under forty pounds of water, I see her eyes roll to the corners in concentration. Her head makes the small movements of the hands of someone driving a car: constant correction. The biggest challenge is to turn all the way around from the pump to go home again. It is a small portion of the ocean, and it swirls and lurches on her head with long movements.

It looks painful and complicated and horrible for the posture and unhealthy for the vertebrae, but I wish I could do it. I have lived in this West African village for two years, but

cannot even balance something solid, like a mango, on my head, let alone a pot filled with liquid.

When I lug my ten liter plastic jug of water to my house by hand, it is only a hundred meters, but the container is heavy and unwieldy. Changing the jug from one hand to the other helps, but it is a change necessary every twenty meters. Handles do not balance. On your head, the water is symmetrical like the star on top of a Christmas tree. Because my life has never depended on it, I have never learned to balance.

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